

A TRIBUTE IN RECOGNITION OF
ADRIAN STRAKER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Adrian Straker, a tireless advocate for children in our community.

Adrian Mary Levell was raised in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, graduated from Midwood High School with honors, received her Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Northwestern University, and attended graduate school at Long Island University, receiving her Master of Science in Counseling and Development.

Following the completion of her studies, Adrian began her career in public service as a caseworker in the foster care unit at St. Vincent's Services in Brooklyn, NY. There Adrian developed her passion for helping to solve the dilemmas and socio-economic challenges of urban life. For the past 17 years, Adrian has been a guidance counselor at Public School 32 serving the Carroll Gardens-Gowanus Housing Development community, where she interacts daily with neighborhood youth and their families serving as the link between classroom teachers, parents, guardians, administration officials, and on-site medical/mental health programs to ensure a student's overall academic achievement and personal development.

Adrian also recently served on the staff of Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz as the Director of Community Boards. In this role, she managed a staff of community relations personnel who maintained interactive relationships with community board chairpersons and district managers. She also served as the borough president's chief architect of faith-based relationships.

Adrian is member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and has served as regional officer and charities chairperson. She is also the past vice chairperson of the Brooklyn Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. Adrian sits on numerous professional and community boards including Inner City Little League Brooklyn, Northwestern University Alumni Association, St. Mark's Independent Block Association, Cornerstone Baptist Church Support Services and is a founding member of the Concerned Crew of Bedford Stuyvesant.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Adrian Straker, a visionary leader and an inspiration to all of New York.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Adrian Straker.

A TRIBUTE TO CHICAGO BLUES
LEGEND CORA "KOKO" TAYLOR
(1928–2009)

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, American music legend, KoKo Taylor, the "Queen of the Blues," died June 3, 2009 in Chicago. Her masterful voice represented the spirit of Chicago—proud, loud and full of life.

Born September 28, 1928, in Bartlett, Tennessee, on a small farm to a family of sharecroppers, Cora Walton would one day be known throughout the world as "KoKo Taylor." She earned her nickname because of a love of chocolate. Orphaned by age 11, along with her five brothers and sisters, Koko developed a love for music from a mixture of gospel she heard in church and blues she heard on radio stations. With one brother accompanying her on a guitar strung with baling wire and another brother on a fife, made out of a corn cob, Koko began her career as a blues woman.

In her early 20s, Koko and her soon-to-be husband, the late Robert "Pops" Taylor, moved to Chicago looking for work. With nothing but, in Koko's words, "35 cents and a box of Ritz crackers," the couple settled on the city's South Side, the cradle of the rough-edged sound of Chicago blues. Taylor found work cleaning houses for wealthy families in the ritzy northern suburbs. At night and on weekends, Koko and Pops would visit the South and West Side blues clubs, where they would hear singers like Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Magic Sam, Little Walter and Junior Wells. And, thanks to prodding from Pops, it wasn't long before Taylor was sitting in with many of the legendary blues artists on a regular basis.

Ms. Taylor's big break came in 1963 when, after one of her signature fiery performances, songwriter/arranger Willie Dixon approached her. Much to Koko's astonishment, he told her, "My God, I never heard a woman sing the blues like you sing the blues." Dixon first recorded Koko for USA Records and, then, secured a Chess Records recording contract for her. He produced several singles and two albums for her—including her huge 1966 hit single Wang Dang Doodle—firmly establishing Koko as the world's number one female blues talent.

Over the course of her nearly 50-year career, Ms. Taylor received numerous awards for her music. She signed with Alligator Records in 1975 and recorded nine albums for the label, eight of which were Grammy-nominated, and came to dominate the female blues singer ranks, winning 25 W.C. Handy Awards, more than any other artist. In 1984, she received a Grammy for the live, multi-artist album Blues Explosion on Atlantic Records. In 2004, KoKo was presented with the coveted National Heritage Fellowship Award from the National Endowment for The Arts. She also earned 25 Blues Music Awards, more than any other blues artist, male or female. On March 3, 1993, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley honored the songstress with a Legend of The Year Award, and declared "Koko Taylor Day" throughout Chicago.

In 1998, Chicago Magazine named Koko "Chicagoan of the Year" and, in 1999, she was inducted into the Blues Foundation's Hall of Fame. "There are many kings of the blues," said The Boston Globe at the time, "but only one queen. Koko's voice is still capable of pinning a listener to the back wall."

There is no doubt she was the queen of the blues and Koko Taylor's legacy will live on through her music. She has influenced a number of musicians including Bonnie Raitt, Shemekia Copeland and Janis Joplin. Her voice lives on in her recordings. We all are forever indebted to her for her contributions to America's rich music history.

HONORING MR. MARK E. NEIHLS

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a pioneer of private education who has provided 25 years of faithful service to the students, families and staff at Coventry Christian Schools in Pottstown, Pennsylvania.

Mark E. Neihls started planning a preschool and registered Christian school in 1983, pouring amazing amounts of energy into fulfilling his vision of providing a world-class education to students in Montgomery, Chester and Berks Counties.

Coventry Christian was incorporated in 1984 and opened with seven preschool students taught by two volunteer teachers. Thanks to Mr. Neihls' outstanding leadership as superintendent, the School has grown to more than 400 students in preschool through 12th grade and has more than 50 employees on two campuses.

Mr. Neihls earned the respect of students, teachers and their families by refusing a paycheck for 19 years while, at the same time, often working six days a week and being available to students well beyond regular school hours.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Mark E. Neihls for his 25 years of humble service as founder and superintendent of Coventry Christian Schools and recognizing his unwavering commitment to a high standard of educational excellence in a Christian setting.

INTRODUCING H.R. 2548, THE KEEP
AMERICA'S WATERFRONTS
WORKING ACT OF 2009

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Madam Speaker, coastal communities across this nation are in trouble. Fishermen who have spent their lives on the water—the sons and daughters of fishermen, the grandchildren of fishermen, fishermen from families that have been fishing for generations, have hung up their boots and do not go out sea any more. My friends and neighbors are giving up a lifetime of fishing. Businesses that depend on the water shut their doors and close their wharves. You see Madam Speaker, I live in a community built around fishing. A community with a working waterfront. A community that is in trouble.

When I was a teenager in my hometown, the island of North Haven, there were more fishermen and the island supported a diverse fishery. Throughout the history of the islands of Penobscot Bay, from the first natives fishing off the island in dugout canoes to the herding seiners, gill netters, ground fisherman, and lobstermen, fishing has been an important part of the islands—providing jobs and a sense of place.

The fishing vessel *Starlight* seined for herding in the waters off the island and brought fish ashore for lobster bait. Now, most boats fish for lobster. My friends and neighbors on